Meet, Greet, Translate: Mapping Happenstances and Network-Driven Translations in Contemporary Literary Transfers
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Abstract

This essay explores the role played by randomness in contemporary poetry translation. I argue that translation happenstance—an instance of cultural transfer that is not part of a pattern and is unlikely to replicate—is a useful concept that explains the decentralized, highly sinuous, and unpredictable context of poetry translation, especially in small, non-hegemonic countries. Happenstances may be one-time occurrences or may evolve into network-driven translations—transfers in which an individual's circle of friends and acquaintances play a mediation role and which develop according to the agents that join the network. Burrowing into the nooks and cranes of printed periodical publications in Romania between 2007 and 2017, this contribution uses a mixed-method approach to investigate computationally (via distant reading) and via close reading the network of contemporary poets, translators, and publications that engaged in a sustained reciprocal translation dialogue with the United States and Canada and concludes that agent-based network models of historical and bibliographic resources are needed in order to account for the complexity of any literary translation act.

Résumé

Cet essai examine le rôle joué par le hasard dans la traduction de la poésie contemporaine. Il affirme que la traduction fortuite – un exemple de transfert culturel qui ne relève pas d'un modèle et est peu susceptible de se reproduire – est un concept utile qui explique le contexte décentralisé, sinueux et imprévisible de la traduction de la poésie, en particulier dans les petits pays non hégémoniques. Les circonstances peuvent être ponctuelles ou évoluer vers des traductions dirigées par le réseau, c'est-à-dire des transferts dans lesquels le cercle d'amis et de connaissances d'une personne joue un rôle de médiation et qui se façonnent en fonction des agents qui rejoignent le réseau. Pour examiner les publications périodiques imprimées en Roumanie de 2007 à 2017, cette contribution utilise une approche mixte, qui combine l'analyse computationnelle (le *distant reading*) et la lecture attentive (le *close reading*) afin d'étudier le réseau de poètes, de traducteurs et de publications contemporains qui se sont engagés dans un dialogue de traduction réciproque soutenu avec les États-Unis et le Canada. L'essai conclut qu'une modélisation des ressources historiques et bibliographiques au moyen d'agents est nécessaire pour rendre compte de la complexité de tout acte de traduction littéraire.

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Introduction

> Romanians, whether in the depths of the Transylvanian provinces or in the better parts of Manhattan, respond to the word 'poetry' with a straightening of the shoulders, a chin-forward movement, and a far-away gaze. We may not be sure of many things, they say with that rearrangement of the body, but we are sure of our poetry,[1]

says Andrei Codrescu in his introduction to the *Born in Utopia* anthology of Romanian poetry, talking about the large number of poetry translations into English that occurred after the collapse of communism in 1989. As I have argued elsewhere, Romanian poets have also "assaulted"—to use the word Codrescu employed for this outward cultural movement—English-language poetries in translation in a way that galvanized both their own writing and the national literature in general.[2] In doing so, they developed various types of agency that considerably multiplied once this former Communist country came to experience a free-market economy, covering a wide range of translating patterns, from no agency at all to full self-reliance, and a poetics of fecundity that speaks about their double allegiance, to world literatures and to the small world of local literary production.

Of these practices that undergird contemporary poetry translation in Romania, random translation exchanges appear to be the prevalent mechanisms by which foreign poetic texts come to life and reach audiences, unearthing the full extent of translators' agency and creativity and allowing for a very dynamic and surprizing literary East-European translation scene. This essay posits that research into translation agency could benefit greatly from network analyses approaches that look into the infinitesimal details of literary translators' activity and acknowledge randomness[3] as the driving forces behind many translation projects. Rather than assuming a priori that translators adhere to clearly contoured groups with well-defined norms and practices, the two notions I propose in this essay—happenstance and network-driven translation—are rooted in the well-established concept of cultural transfer,[4] which exploits the manifold nature of agent connectedness before any translation actually takes place and also downplays the idea of national and geographical borders[5] in favour of a more transnational stance. Moreover, it lays

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[1] Andrei CODRESCU, "Introduction", in: Carmen FIRAN & Edward FOSTER & Paul Doru MUGUR (eds), *Born in Utopia: An Anthology of Modern and Contemporary Romanian Poetry,* New York, Talisman House Publishers, 2016, 3-5.

[2] Raluca Andreia TANASESCU, *Translation and Chaos. Poetry Translators Agency in a Non-Hegemonic Context. A Digital Humanities Approach*, University of Ottawa, 2018.

[3] This essay uses chance and randomness interchangeably.

[4] Michel ÉSPAGNE and Michael WERNER, "La Construction d'une référence culturelle allemande en France : Genèse et histoire (1750-1914)", in: *Annales ÉSC* 4, 1987, 969-992.

[5] Anthony PYM, *Method in Translation History*, Amsterdam, St. Jerome Publishing, 1998.

stress upon the reciprocity of literary exchanges,[6] as well as on translators' very individual interests, be they pecuniary or otherwise.[7] To the multifariousness of cultural transfers, the case study presented in this article—the most prolific contemporary English-language poetry translator in Romania—adds a new dimension, that of transfers that happen by chance and evolve in a fully-grown and meticulously nurtured personal network.

The image offered by Romanian mainstream literary channels in regards to U.S. poetry translation in this small Eastern European country in general is one of scarcity: "[u]nfortunately, modern and contemporary American poetry was little translated; practically, the overviews and anthologies published in Romania after World War II can be counted on one hand."[8] However, this kind of assessment fails to account for the richness of periodical publications that include poetry translations in many of their issues. Indeed, many contemporary Romanian poets, such as Claudiu Komartin, recognize their allegiance to one American poetry school or another: "[…] almost all my favourite discourses in Romanian poetry since the 1980s are each attached to an important American poet or to one influential U.S. poetry school after the Second World War."[9] It is difficult to believe that the forty-two translated books published over more than seventy years have influenced an entire literature alone or that American poets have influenced their Romanian peers without any kind of mediation via translation. Therefore, I propose to look at a print periodical network which spans only over ten years, but which brings to the fore four times as many American and Canadian authors compared to the Romanian publishing industry approach.

After conceptualizing the notion of random literary translation exchanges within a complexity framework in the first section, the essay proposes a mixed-method approach that will be explained in section 2. On the one hand, the computational analysis will lay out the structure of the network, in which the nodes are U.S. and Canadian poets and their translators and the edges (the links between the nodes) are the publication venues. This approach is called distant reading and, in our case, uses network analysis to make an initial sense of a large volume of literary data.[10] More specifically, we will run a series of measurements, related to the connectedness of the network, which indicate potential instances of random translations. On the other hand, the close reading component of the method will add a layer of information to this raw data structure via descriptive translation studies, looking in minute detail at paratexts and at any other sources related to the

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[6] Lieven D'HULST, Maud GONNE, Tessa LOBBES, Reine MEYLAERTS, and Tom VERSCHAFFEL, "Towards a Multipolar Model of Cultural Mediators within Multicultural Spaces. Cultural Mediators in Belgium, 1830-194 »5," in: *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 92, 2014, 1255-1275.

[7] Maud GONNE, "From Binarity to Complexity: A Latourian Perspective on Cultural Mediators. The Case of Georges Eekhoud's Intra-National Activities," in: Diana ROIG-SANZ & Reine MEYLAERTS (eds.), *Literary Translation and Cultural Mediators in 'Peripheral' Cultures. Customs Officers or Smugglers*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, 263-290.

[8] Marius CHIVU. "Poeți americani," [American Poets] in: *Dilema Veche* 521, 2014, [online], http://bit.ly/2GuOczH.

[9] Claudiu KOMARTIN, "Antologia mea ideală din americani," [My Ideal Anthology of American Poetry], 2011, [online], http://bit.ly/2CmRfuZ.

[10] Franco MORETTI, "Conjectures on World Literature," in: *New Left Review* 1, 2000, [online], https://bit.ly/333gizq.

respective translation, as well as at the translator's biography, in order to confirm the random nature of such exchanges. Then, section 3 offers an analysis of the whole U.S. and Canadian contemporary poetry translation network in Romanian print periodicals and identifies the amount of exchanges that may be labelled as happenstances by combining distant and close reading. Finally, the fourth section is dedicated to the most prominent translator-node in the network under scrutiny, Olimpia Iacob, whose work is a classic example of network-driven translation, while the last section presents some concluding remarks.

Randomness in Contemporary Poetry Translation into Romanian

In order to understand randomness in translation, one necessarily has to consider the non-linearity of cultural transfers. Non-linearity has been increasingly explored over the past few years, since Kobus Marais brought complexity to the fore as a fitting and necessary paradigm for translation studies.[11] After reductionism-informed modernity and post-modernity, Marais posits it is time for an epistemology that accounts for and embraces paradox. In doing so, he quotes physical chemist and Nobel Prize Laureate Ilya Prigogine, who argued that science's new way of looking at the world needs to take into account "fluctuations, instability, multiple choices, and limited predictability":[12] "Before, science was about cause, not chance. Now it is about *chance, possibility, and probability.* In this new view, freedom and determinism also seem to hang together in a complex relationship, at the edge of chaos."[13] To this end, Marais claims that it is important for translation studies to acknowledge that its binaries (such as source and target, or agent and system, and so on) are part and parcel of non-equilibrium systems and exist "at the edge of chaos," in a constant state of tension. Furthermore, the field should revisit its understanding of the notion of "system" by looking into complex adaptive systems and actor-network links from a theoretical point of view and into computational affordances from a methodological one. Within the framework of cultural transfers and complexity, distance has been taken from agency in translation as highly dependent on regulating bodies, on the status of translation as a profession, or on the global circulation of books as a measure of prominence, with more and more attention paid to, for instance, translators as "smugglers"[14] or to poet-translators as expert agents with a clear personal ideology and with carefully groomed networks of personal contacts.[15]

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[11] Kobus Marais, *Translation Theory and Development Studies. A Complexity Theory Approach*, New York, Routledge, 2014.

[12] *Ibid.* 4.

[13] *Ibid.* 21, emphasis mine.

[14] Diana Roig-Sanz & Reine Meylaerts (eds.), *Literary Translation and Cultural Mediators in 'Peripheral' Cultures. Customs Officers or Smugglers*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

[15] Francis R. Jones, "The Poetry Translator as Dedicated Expert," in: *META: Journal des traducteurs*, 60, 2, 2015, 344; Francis R. Jones, *Poetry Translating as Expert Action: Processes, Priorities and Networks*, Amsterdam, John Benjamins, 2011.

Very interestingly for the purpose of this paper, Imogen Cohen builds on Andrew Chesterman's "On Explanation"[16] and discusses randomness as possibly impacting most translators and translators scholars in one way or another.[17] Using the definition of randomness advanced by Nassim Nicholas Taleb in relation to the social sciences and humanities,[18] she argues that translation scholars must be aware of the fact that their account of past translation events—the real history as she calls it—is always incomplete information and that the first affected element in translation scholarship is causation. She also cites Anthony Pym, who says that for every translation event there are at least four causes at work.[19] However, Cohen nuances, it is precisely because of randomness that we should not be primed to believe that for any translation account the number of causes is "somewhere in the region of four."[20] In other words, uniform accounts about how translation happens should take into account non-linearity.

Indeed, the example the present essay is built on—translations in periodicals—has a very different dynamics than translation as we know it within the book publishing industry. While the latter follow the determinist logic of publishing programs, global translation flows, and financial performance, the former is characterized by a very high degree of indeterminateness, which permeates all the levels of the translation process, from the causes that trigger the translation act to the choice of publication venue, the frequency of publication, and so on. That is, there is a lack of pattern or a lack of any discernible principle of organization at all levels. In common parlance, circumstances and acts that are due to chance are called happenstances, therefore we choose the umbrella term 'translation happenstance' to describe a wide range of translation transfers that start out by chance, with a low probability of replication. Translation happenstances are interlingual literary exchanges that take place randomly, without a clear agenda, and that may be triggered by a wide range of factors, be they literary affinity, scholarly interest, literary barters, academic mobility, or simply the need to create content for poorly financed literary magazines. They may be one-time transfers or may know multiple instantiations without actually turning into a substantial set of exchanges. Using this notion, I will argue that the evolution of the Romanian literary system depends at least as much on such non-linear unannounced and unsupported individual contributions as it depends on the more traditional mechanisms of literary promotion and support. The intrinsic heterogeneity of such exchanges makes a very dynamic and diverse translation system, which is very difficult to model and whose evolution is hard to predict.

If translation happenstances are unlikely to replicate, network-driven translations are more predictable and more dynamic instantiations of translation

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[16] Andrew CHESTERMAN, "On Explanation", in: Anthony PYM, Miriam SHLESINGER, & Daniel SIMEONI (eds.), *Beyond Descriptive Translation Studies: Investigations in Homage to Gideon Toury*, Amsterdam, John Benjamins, 2008, 363–379.

[17] Imogen COHEN, "On randomness," in: *Target, International Journal of Translation Studies*, 30, 1, 2018, 3-23.

[18] Nassim Nicholas TALEB, *The Black Swan. The Impact of the Highly Improbable*, 2nd ed., New York, Random House, 2010.

[19] Anthony PYM, *Method in Translation History*, 158.

[20] Imogen COHEN, "On Randomness," 14.

transfers started by mere chance. Therefore, they are complex happenstances that evolve into a series of further quasi-predictable transfers, depending on and/or being influenced by the translator's network of acquaintances. The continuation of the series of transfers is more probable than in single-occurrence translation happenstances, but it is still difficult to intuitively understand and predict the next step in the translation process due to the non-linearity of the translator's network. It is also quite difficult to locate the origin of the network and discern a preference for an author, literary period, type of text, or literary motif, for instance, because the selection of texts to be translated actually depends on the authors in the network, as well as on other agents connected to other authors outside the translator's immediate circle. The only constants of such exchanges are the translator and the act of translation, with everything else in the process highly dependent on the conditions of operation and on the other agents that may join the network.

Unlike the notion of networkers as gatekeepers, proposed by authors such as Björn-Olav Dozo[21], many of the translators referred to in this essay do not appear to act according to a literary agenda: rather, our network analysis suggests and the close reading confirms, they are either one-time translators of a certain author or even one-time translators of poetry. Neither happenstances nor network-dependant transfers rely on institutional funding, being rather driven by, for instance, the gratification of personal connectedness, be it in person or simply virtual. Contemporary Romanian poetry translation in print periodicals—the case study presented here—has been growing alongside translators' networks of acquaintances and has been refashioning itself according to their personal tastes and interests, more so than due to any kind of financial support. Although deeply integrative processes, such transfers in periodical have not been concerned mostly with the enrichment of the national literature. They have rather followed the dynamics of desired international relationships after a long period during which Romanian intellectuals had been isolated from the Western world. Cultural transfers via translation have played a multiple role: giving translators a voice; offering them literary status locally; offering them access to the outside world; involving foreign authors in translations of local literature by means of reciprocation; and so on. However, with very meagre financial means available, Romanian poetry translators have been engaged in such transfers whenever occasions presented themselves, and not in a planned and financially sustainable way.

Following the 1989 revolution, transatlantic connections became increasingly desirable and also achievable for Romanian poets and translators, who were finally able to travel freely, meet poets they admired, invite them to the many literary events they organized, and thus form a network rooted in the logic of literary barters, rather than in institutional support.[22] Thus, translation has gradually become the most important means by which they communicated this finally accessible New World and, at the same time, valuable currency in a highly deregulated and pauper publishing industry. The benefits of the newly acquired mobility were twofold. First,

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[21] Björn-Olav DOZO, *Mesures de l'écrivain. Profil socio-littéraire et capital relationnel dans l'entre-deux-guerres en Belgique francophone*, Liège, Presses universitaires de Liège, 2011.
[22] Raluca TANASESCU, "Chaos out of Order. Translations of American and Canadian Contemporary Poetry into Romanian before 1989," in: *Chronotopos - A Journal of Translation History*, 1, 2, 2020, 64-94.

Romanian literati were able to deepen intellectual exchanges through various translation transfers, ranging from literary festivals and episodic translations in local journals to ampler publication projects. Second, American and Canadian authors exploited the chance of being translated in yet another lesser known language for a plus of literary capital at home. In spite of the financial scarcity of the Romanian literary scene, the network of transfers has been growing constantly for the past thirty years: more and more international festivals have been organized with help from local authorities and local literary journals have continued at least to survive, if not, thrive, due to the influx of free content from writers and translators and to the affordances of digital publishing.

A heuristic notion related to that of cultural transfers is that of micro-modernity.[23] In micro-modernity, one of the ways we look at the world shifts from looking at the local from a global perspective to looking at the global from a more proximate vantage point. This new perspective that originates in our immediate proximity has the advantage of opening up the world around us, of expanding it, rather than compressing it. In Cronin's words, microspection is a way of positively reconfiguring the possibilities of the local, of re-enchanting a world formerly disheartened by globalization, of pursuing endotic travels.[24] At the same time, it seeks to avoid the dichotomy between the global and the local by emphasizing larger webs of connectivity and by going beyond the much invoked 'sense of place' that informs the literature on "default communities,"[25] that is, nations, just as Pym proposes via his notion of transfer maps.[26]

To the defamiliarization brought about by globalization Cronin opposes a zooming-in process, or a process of endotic travel, which ultimately means getting acquainted with and understanding the world around us in its complexity, as the politics of microspection is essentially concerned with the unseen. If we look from very high above at the Romanian book market, we will see merely a speck on the global book stage.[27] If we hope to spot the portion dedicated to poetry volumes, the speck will disappear altogether. But if we zoom in, the number of translated poetry books and anthologies will remain the same, while a whole web of translators, authors, and literary journals that do not depend on the precarious book market will reveal itself to us. However financially insignificant this small world is, its size and mode of operation offer unparalleled insight into how poetry translators work[28] and how they connect to all the other nodes in the network—in this case to other

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[23] Michael CRONIN, *Translation in the Digital Age*, New York, Routledge, 2013.
[24] Michael CRONIN, *The Expanding World. Towards a Politics of Microspection*, New York, Verso Books, 2012.
[25] Arjun APPADURAI, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1996.
[26] Anthony PYM, *Method in Translation History*.
[27] According to the 2016 statistics published by the Federation of European Publishers, the total market value was estimated at 36-38 billion €. The total number of books published the same year was 590,000 titles. In Romania, the total book market has an estimated value of 60 million € (0.15%) (Marius CHIVU, *Dilema veche* 630, 2016).
[28] The network of US and Canadian contemporary poetry translation in Romanian periodicals contains both random translation transfers and transfers of a more deterministic nature, such as those related to translation episodes commissioned by the literary journals or translation series initiated by Romanian poets with a self-declared translation program. However, this essay focuses on the former and touches on the latter only for the purpose of comparison.

translators and to the authors they translate. More importantly, its financial redundancy discloses the network's chaotic mode of operation and the important role randomness may play in cultural transfers in general.

Examining cultural transfers via analytical microspection—"the proper investigation of places and their inhabitants through methods and practices which reveal the full, fractal complexity of human habitation"[29]—is, I suggest, essential for bringing out into the open the intricacies of poetry translation in Romania and to emphasize the role randomness plays in such cultural transfers. Fundamentally unseen on the translated book market, where "competition is acerbic and almost everything boils down to money,"[30] contemporary U.S. and Canadian poetry translation lives, for the most part, in the labyrinthine confines of periodical publications. In the case of a small literature like the one I refer to, the models that define translated poetry exchanges appear to be grounded in the logic of periodical publishing rather than in the mechanisms of local book markets. Literary magazines play in this respect a triple role: first, they are a presentation and promotion platform used by translators for avant-premières or simply to present selections that may or may not end up being published in book form; second, they play an evaluation role, as they host reviews of translated books or essays on the works of the authors translated; and finally, they play an essential part in networking, acting as a link between translators, authors, publishers, and the readers. Besides the salient role they have in the cultural life of any space (be it local, regional or national; be it online or offline), they are often much more accessible a publication site than the mainstream or even indie book publishing industry, since production costs are significantly lower and competition is less intense. They are, therefore, transfer spaces that beg for more thorough investigation.

Computational Network Analysis: A Vehicle for Endotic Travel

The first translation scholars to argue for the usefulness of a network studies approach were Deborah Folaron and Hélène Buzelin, who co-edited in 2007 a special issue of *META : Journal des traducteurs*, noting that "the notion [of network] appeared as a way to move away from social determinism and to favour explanations based on the relations between entities rather than their substance."[31] In natural sciences, networks are the most reliable way of analysing any complex system. Complex systems can be formally described as consisting of many non-identical elements (nodes, or vertices) connected by various interactions (edges, or links). Visualizing the topology of any network as a graph model is an "[…] important benchmark for understanding complex networks, […] used to test candidate mechanisms believed to be responsible for the onset of a particular topological

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[29] Michael CRONIN, *The Expanding World*, 65.
[30] Bogdan-Alexandru STĂNESCU, "Poezie: ca de obicei, înghesuială. Una bună," [Poetry: Crowded as Usual. In a Good Sense] in: *Suplimentul de cultură* 549, 2017, [online], http://bit.ly/2ElIDXn.
[31] Deborah FOLARON and Hélène BUZELIN, "Introduction. Connecting Translation and Network Studies," in: *META : Journal des traducteurs*, 52, 4, 2007, 626.

feature, thus providing an insight into realistic network formation processes."[32] Besides describing these exchanges formally, network analysis offers a series of measurements that determine the performance of the network as a whole and of the nodes within the network. Each of the network features and measurements are described in the following paragraphs and exemplified in relation to literary translation.

Unlike systemic models, be they open or closed, networks enable a two-pronged approach: on the one hand, an examination of local, particular, and infinitesimal processes and, on the other, a contextualization of such small-scale processes in the wider transnational webs of connectivity cultures are involved in.[33] In terms of agency, networks emphasize the connective mind of translators. Our particular network maps the connection Romanian poetry translators establish with American and Canadian authors and their interaction via translations in periodicals is formalized by the edges. The edges that connect the nodes in our graph visualizations do not represent only transfers between cultures and may also be lines of flight that translators embark on, they may represent the cooperation translators establish with authors, publishers, and other translators. Thus, these network representations provide a layout of the distances that translation sets to cross and of our potential to act through communication. However, the computational analysis of such interactions cannot be sufficient in itself because it does not offer much information related to the context of the transfer. Although the edges in our particular graphs do carry information related to the publication venue and the number of times that a certain author was translated, more information is needed in order to decide on the random character of a certain transfer.

Real-life networks—translation networks included—are characterized by a series of non-trivial features.[34] The first such feature is their *scale-free distribution*, that is the number of links emanating from a node can be as low or as high as possible: translators can work on one hundred translations or on one translation only. Scale-free distribution is driven by the power law, which stipulates that the proportion of nodes having k neighbours is [proportional to] k to a certain power, which results in the majority of nodes having a small number of neighbours, with only some of the nodes acting as hubs, or connectors. Another feature is *the (anti)correlation between degrees of neighbouring nodes*: nodes with a large value of the degree tend either to 'attract' or to 'repel' nodes with a similar degree, "a property known as assortativity or disassortativity, respectively."[35] Applied to a translation in periodicals context, such heterogeneous network would intuitively be disassortative, while assortativity would rather be a feature of the book publishing industry, where publishers compete for similarly large portfolios. Finally, a third important feature is *clustering*. A

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[32] Guido CALDARELLI and Diego GARLASCHELLI, "Self-Organization and Complex Networks," in: Thilo GROSS and Hiroki SAYAMA, (eds.), *Adaptive Networks: Theory, Models and Applications*, New York, Springer-Verlag, 2009, 11.
[33] Anthony PYM, "Cross-Cultural Networking: Translators in the French-German Network of *Petites Revues* at the End of the Nineteenth Century," in: *META : Journal des traducteurs* 52, 4, 2007, 744–762.
[34] In mathematics, a non-trivial feature is one that has some variables or terms that are not equal to zero.
[35] Guido CALDARELLI and Diego GARLASCHELLI, "Self-Organization and Complex Networks".

clustering coefficient is a measure of connectedness, the degree to which nodes in a network tend to cluster together. As noted by Caldarelli and Garlaschelli, high clustering is often combined with a small value of the average distance between pairs of nodes, and the term 'small world effect' is used to describe this combination. A disconnected translation network tends to be the host of a higher number of random translation exchanges, while a connected network will be clearly a sign of more homogeneous types of transfers, with many translator-nodes engaged in a programmatic activity of translation. Thus, the disconnected components will flag possible instances of translation happenstance, whose nature will be confirmed by the close reading of the respective journal entries, the paratexts, and any other available material related to the respective publication. However, random translations may also appear to be connected whenever the same author was translated by a second translator, whose other translations makes them more likely to be connected to the main component. The same methodology will be used to identify instances of network-driven translation. Such transfers will likely be embedded in the connected components of the graph, since the network in which the authors and their translator belong is much more extended and, therefore, more likely to be connected to the rest of the graph. Generally, it is also more probable for network-driven translations to present the above-mentioned small world effect, in that the neighbours of any given node are likely to be neighbours of each other.

Beside looking at a graph's features, we will also run four specific measurements. The first one is called the degree. A node with a high degree is a node with many links (connections). The metrics may be very simple, as a translator with five translations will have a lower degree than a translator with ten, but it is of utmost importance for the connectedness of the graph: the higher the average degree, the more connected the structure. The weighted average degree represents the number of connections a translator has in the network, but with the number of translation features per author factored in. The second measurement is called betweenness centrality (bc) and is a measure of centrality in a graph based on the shortest paths—that is a quantification of the number of times a node acts as a bridge along the shortest path between two other nodes. The more times it acts as a bridge, the more likely it is for the node to influence the network, in spite of a potential low number of direct links. Such nodes qualify best to flag network-driven translations, especially when they have a high degree. The third one is called closeness centrality (cc), a measure of the degree to which an individual is near all other individuals in a network. Therefore, a low closeness centrality will likely flag translation happenstances. Last but not least, the EigenCentrality determines the level of influence of a node in a network not only according to the number of links incident on that node, but also on the number of links their connections have. All these measurements combined with the features of the whole network and with the close reading of the corpus will provide, in our opinion, a solid ground for identifying random translation transfers and quantifying their importance within this complex structure.

The corpus[36] in which I ground my analyses, descriptions, and interpretations consists of Romanian translations of U.S. and Canadian English-language contemporary poetry published in print periodicals over a period of ten years, between 2007 and 2017.[37] By contemporary poetry I chiefly understand poetry that was published after 1960 by poets born during the last decade of the nineteenth century and onwards. In terms of selected authors, it reflects the work of US- and Canada-born poets and of authors of various extractions living and writing in Canada and the United States, as well as transnational poets of American and Canadian origin, because I considered them as manifesting double loyalty.[38] The overall corpus is by no means exhaustive, but certainly contains most of the translations published within the specified timeframe: 1960-2017.

A Distant, yet Close, Reading of Poetry Translation in Romanian Literary Periodicals

One might expect the Romanian poetry translation network to resemble a small-world structure, with a high clustering coefficient and a small number of nodes—that is, a short chain of acquaintances—that can be reached through a low number of steps. Nevertheless, as shown in Figure 1, that is far from being the case when we refer to the translation network in print periodicals. After feeding the software[39] with the bibliographic information, the generated network presented in Figures 1a and 1b shows a disconnected graph consisting of 310 nodes (authors and translators) and 302 edges (translations). This graph is organized in a giant component (G0, Figure 2)—a connected graph containing a significant proportion of the total number of nodes—and 29 other smaller components.[40] The giant component exhibits 222 nodes and 241 edges and accounts for 71.61% of the network's nodes and 79.80% of the same network's links. The second and third subgraphs are drastically smaller, each accounting for only 3.87% of the nodes in the network. All the other 27 clusters account for 20.65% of the total number of nodes.

With a number of links per node varying between 1 and 68, the average degree for the whole network (G) is 1.9483 and 2.1711 for G0, while G1 and G2 show slightly lower values (lower translations per node), of 1.8(3) and 1.6666 respectively.

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[36] All the translations are presented in footnotes throughout the essay, with sources available online listed as bitlinks.

[37] The timeframe was conditioned by the resources available at the National Library of Romania.

[38] One of the most relevant examples is T.S. Eliot, who declared in an interview: "I'd say that my poetry has obviously more in common with my distinguished contemporaries in America than with anything written in my generation in England. That I'm sure of. […] It wouldn't be what it is, and I imagine it wouldn't be so good; putting it as modestly as I can, it wouldn't be what it is if I'd been born in England, and it wouldn't be what it is if I'd stayed in America. It's a combination of things. But in its sources, in its emotional springs, it comes from America." (Donald HALL, "The Art of Poetry No. 1. T.S. Eliot," *The Paris Review*, 1959, [online], http://bit.ly/2DsHp7u, 25.)

[39] Python Software Foundation. Python Language Reference, version 3.6., [online], http://www.python.org.

[40] A component (or a connected component) is a subgraph (G0 to Gx) in which any two vertices are connected to each other by paths, and which is connected to no additional vertices in the supergraph (G). They are, therefore, smaller graphs disconnected from the supergraph.

The values increase in the case of the weighted average degree by 30% for G and by 22% for G0. While this coefficient is obviously a useful measurement for the network in its ensemble, it also demonstrates how critical it is not to treat agents as social averages, like traditional sociology has taught us to. If we do so, an agent with 68 links (translated authors) may be evaluated like one with two links only if those two links (authors) are deemed important for one reason or another.

Figure 1. Network of contemporary U.S. and Canadian poetry translations in Romanian print periodicals between 2007 and 2017.
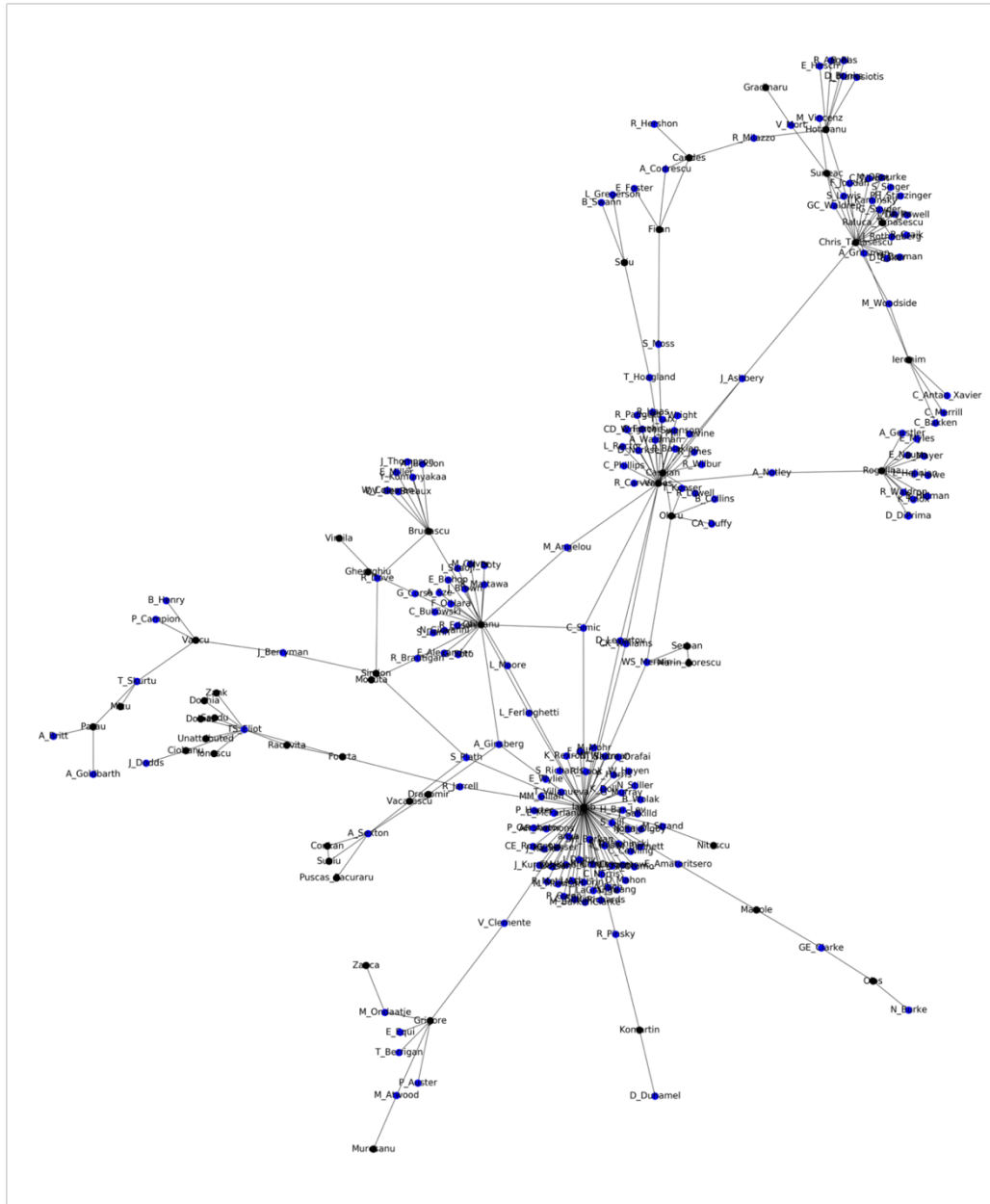
Figure 2. The giant component (G0) in the 2007-2017 network of translations
in Romanian print periodicals
Legend: black = translators, blue = authors

Also, although this is an unconnected graph[41] and the connectedness (or the density) is very low (0.006), the analysis helps us understand that disregarding the "strays" (components G3 – G29) means neglecting a fifth of the network—that is, 27 components of translators and authors (cf. Table 1):

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[41] A graph is disconnected if at least two nodes of the graph are not linked.

G components = 30	G0 nodes = 222 (71.61%)	G0 edges = 241 (79.80%)
G nodes = 310	G1 nodes = 12 (3.87%)	G1 edges = 11 (3.64%)
G edges = 302	G2 nodes = 12 (3.87%)	G2 edges = 5 (1.65%)
	G3-29 nodes = 64 (20.65%)	G3-29 edges = 45 (14.91%)

Table 1. The size of the 2007-2017 network of translations in printed periodicals

The low density and average degree and the extremely weak clustering of the network (0.06 both for G and G0 and 0 for G1 and G2) demonstrate that the small world effect is not present and that, in spite of its size, this is a highly a-social, fragmented network that justifies seeing poetry translation in this particular context in terms happenstances, rather than in terms of any other cohesive structure. Figure 1b shows graphically the number of happenstances within the whole network, with numerous instantiations both in the main, more cohesive component, and in the disconnected ones, which indicates that chance plays an essential role at all levels. A most relevant example in this respect is the association of reputed translator Grete Tartler with occasional translator Ileana Grivu. The computational analysis shows that Tartler and Grivu actually form a highly ranked component by themselves, G3, due to their translations of Louise Glück. Nevertheless, Tartler does not owe her reputation to poetry translations from the English and both herself and I. Grivu appear in our corpus just once. A closer look into the background of the two translators suggests that while Tartler may have chosen Glück for her literary stature, Grivu might have been interested in Glück's reworking of Greek and Roman myths. In spite of the identification of the possible causes that triggered such one-time translations, the two translators do not appear with any other renditions of American contemporary poetry outside this corpus, making it impossible to predict whether they will do it again.

The translations done by Liliana Sandu, Aprilia Zank, Elena Ciobanu, and Florin Dochia of T.S. Eliot's work are one-time occurrences and cannot be associated with a certain translation program focused on bringing the vastness Eliot's work into Romanian culture, unlike a series of translation republications by Virgil Nemoianu or Stefan A. Doinas which were part of an extensive publishing program before 1989. Isabel Vintilă tried her hand at translation with a rendition from Rita Dove,[42] and so did Sînziana Mureseanu with a selection from Margaret Atwood,[43] Andrei Zanca with Michael Ondaatje,[44] Antonela Suciu and Marius

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[42] Rita DOVE, "Adolescenţă II; Bistro Styx," (Isabel Vintilă, Trans.) *Bucovina literară* 7, 2007, 40.

[43] Margaret ATWOOD, "Casa păpusilor înviată; Poetul s-a întors; Tăinuirea." (Sânziana Mureseanu, Trans.). *Ateneu* 1, 2010, 24.

[44] Michael ONDAATJE, "Îngropat; Ţărmul medieval," (Andrei Zanca, Trans.) *Euphorion* 7-8, 2008, 18.

Conkan with Anne Sexton,[45] Vlad A. Gheorghiu with Gregory Corso,[46] Radu Ulmeanu with a selection from Romanian-American writer and literary critic Claudia Moscovici,[47] and literary critic and professor Felix Nicolau with a translation of exchange Master's student D.M. Andrei's poetic work.[48] There is absolutely no identifiable pattern in their activity as literary translators of U.S. and Canadian poetry: these translators have published few other translation beyond the channels and the period in question, if ever.

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[45] Anne SEXTON, "Sânul; Celebrarea uterului meu; Sângele meu la 40." (Antonela Suciu and Marius Conkan, Trans.) *Steaua* 1-2, 2010, 42-43.

[46] Gregory CORSO, "Mandat pe treptele unui Harlem din Puerto Rico; Am 25 de ani; Am avut un manuscris al lui Shelley." (Vlad A. Gheorghiu, Trans.) *Arges* 4, 2014, 20.

[47] Claudia MOSCOVICI, "Îndemn; Scrierea dragostei; Rădăcini si aer." (Radu Ulmeanu, Trans.) *Acolada* 4, 2012, 27.

[48] D.M. ANDREI, "Nu luna era cu răspunsul; Baban, grăsan popă fluviu; Fă stânga împrejur." (Felix Nicolau, Trans.) *Arca* 4-6, 2014, 135.
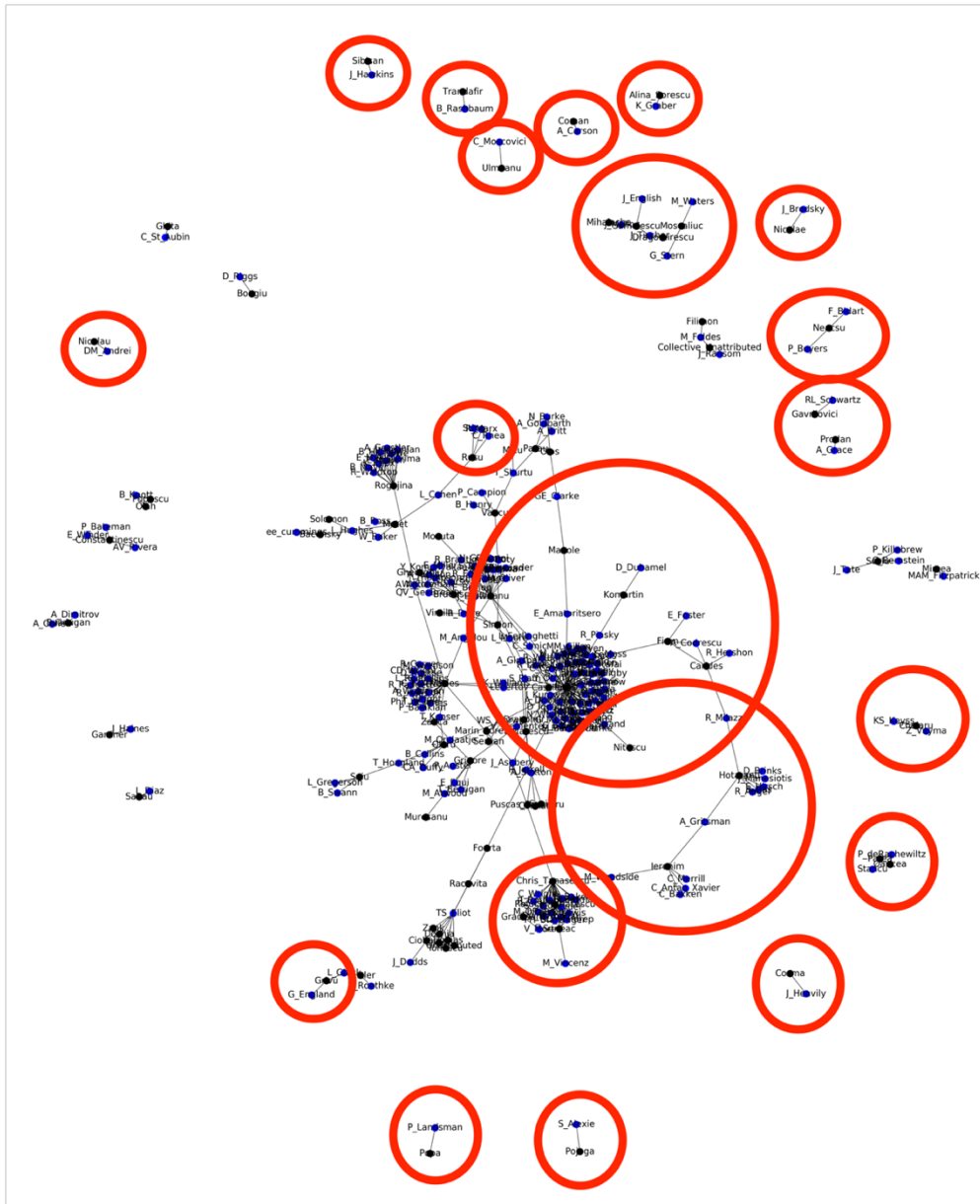
Figure 1b. Network of contemporary U.S. and Canadian poetry translations
in Romanian print periodicals between 2007 and 2017—emphasis on happenstances.

The betweeness centrality coefficient (bc) in the giant component G0 (222 nodes
and 241 edges) reveals the following interesting facts: Since authors and translators
are treated equally (they are all nodes), both categories are bound to appear as central
nodes in this network. According to this measurement, the most important first ten
nodes in the network consist of an equal number of translators and authors (Figures
3-11, ranked by bc score), who influence the flow in the network the most.

What is most striking though is the fact that one of these top nodes is
translator Nina Cassian, who is present in the corpus with only five translated

authors in two haphazard translation events.[49] However, the authors she translated and their popularity with other translators made Cassian acquire a position of power in terms of placement in the network: she is so well positioned, that it is very likely for her to be "bumped into" by researchers accessing the network from very different points of entry. Having been politically exiled for many years in New York and somehow isolated from the hip literary scene in Bucharest, Cassian was guided by her close friend, poet Carmen Firan—a New York-based poet herself—to publish the translations in the provincial *Scrisul românesc* literary journal, managed by Firan's father. Her brief introduction to her 2012 contribution, titled "Different Interpretations," is very revealing: she confesses she took the liberty of deleting the second stanza in Robert Lowell's poem because she did not think it was related in any way to the first one; she admits to having been tormented by the fixed form of Wilbur's poem, while disclosing that the latter had also translated and included one of her poems in his Selected Poems; she identifies Simic's poem as the easiest to translate and the "incoherently-sophisticated" Ashbery as much more difficult. She concedes that her being low on energy was the reason why she did not translate more contemporary American poets.[50]

Also, while I was expecting to see translators Olimpia Iacob (Figure 3), Alex Văsies (Figure 4), Chris Tanasescu (Figure 6), and Liviu Ofileanu (Figure 9) reflected by these measurements because of the make-up of their portfolios and number of edges departing from them, my initial reading of the corpus could not place authors and translators at the same level. The computational network analysis quickly disclosed that authors are also well-positioned in the network (Figures 5, 7, 10, and 11) due to the positions their translators hold, and not necessarily to the number of times they were translated: the more central the translator is in the network, the more visible authors become in the respective network. For instance, Alice Notley was translated only twice, but because she was translated by Văsies, she ranks the 11th (bc = 0.0485), while Lawrence Ferlinghetti (bc = 0.015), Rita Dove (bc = 0.005), or Langston Hughes (bc = 0.0005), who were each translated three times, but by various translators with lower centrality scores, do not come in anywhere close to Notley.

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[49] Stanley MOSS, "Flori de câmp," (Nina Cassian, Trans.), in: *Scrisul românesc* 7, 6, 2009, 17; Richard WILBUR, "Iertarea," (Nina Cassian, Trans.) in: *Scrisul românesc* 10, 6, 2012, 19; Robert LOWELL, "Sudoarea nopții," (Nina Cassian, Trans.) in: *Scrisul românesc* 10, 6, 2012, 19; John ASHBERY, "Variațiuni," (Nina Cassian, Trans.), in: *Scrisul românesc* 10, 6, 2012, 19; Charles SIMIC, "Clubul de noapte," (Nina Cassian, Trans.) in: *Scrisul românesc* 10, 6, 2012, 19.
[50] Nina Cassian, "Alte interpretări," in: *Scrisul românesc* 10, 6, 2012, 19.

Figure 3. Translator O. Iacob (bc = 0.3878)

Figure 4. Translator A. Văsies (bc = 0.1816)

Figure 5. Author J. Ashbery (bc = 0.1177)

Figure 6. Translator C. Tanasescu (bc = 0.1160)

Figure 7. Author C. Simic (bc = 0.0926)

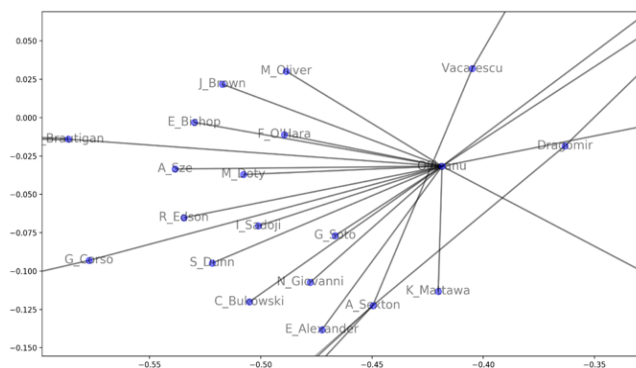Figure 8. Translator N. Cassian (bc = 0.0856)

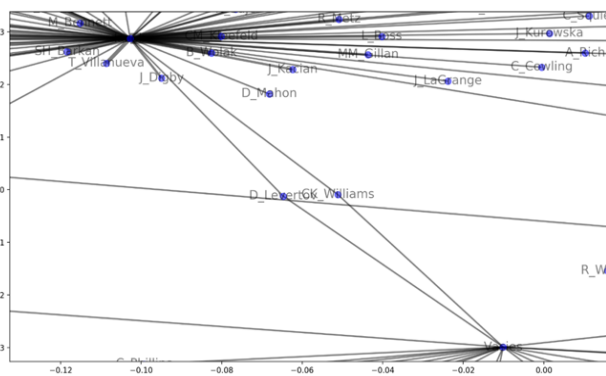Figure 9. Translator L. Ofileanu (bc = 0.0852)

Figure 10. Authors C.K. Williams (bc = 0.0583)
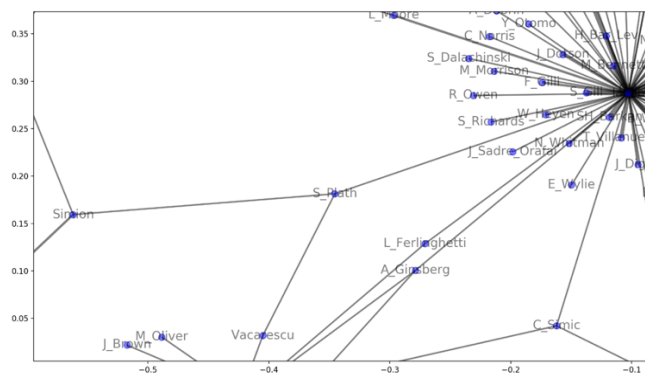and D. Levertov (bc = 0.0583)

Figure 11. Author S. Plath (bc = 0.0577)

In terms of closeness centrality (cc), the graphs show a similar top six—O. Iacob (cc = 0.23), C. Simic (cc = 0.2029), C.K. Williams (cc = 0.2013), D. Levertov (cc = 0.2013), A. Văsies (cc = 0.1963), and N. Cassian (cc = 0.1848)—, and four new author entries—A. Ginsberg (cc = 0.1844), L. Ferlinghetti (cc = 0.1823), S. Plath (cc = 0.1810), and R. Jarrell (cc = 0.1786). These are the individuals who are best placed to influence the entire network most quickly. In our case, O. Iacob and N. Cassian are the only translators in top ten who are bound to influence the network fast, the first due to her productivity (high number of links) and the latter due to her strategic choices. The ranking also reflects the relatively high number of translation events for each of these eight new authors in top ten (3 translation events each) and the high profile of their translators, such as Iacob and Ofileanu, which places them close to the other nodes in the network. Jarrell was translated only twice, but by well-positioned Iacob and selective Foarță, who himself has a strong position in the network because of his translations of Eliot, not because of the frequent translations. Closeness centrality has translator C. Tanasescu down over 60 spots and reflects his interest in having poets that have never been translated join the network.

Finally, the Eigenvector centrality (or the EigenCentrality) provides a very similar top 10 to the closeness centrality. This is how, out of the following ten spots,

five are claimed by authors like Vince Clemente, Ede Amatoritsero, or J. Sadre Orfai, who were translated by only one translator each (O. Iacob and Diana Manole). However, because they were translated more than once and because they were published alongside poets like G. E. Clarke (as is the case with E. Amatoritsero), they acquire a high "all-around score," making them very visible in the network. Also, the EigenCentrality ranks authors better than translators than the other types of centrality do, a result of their translators' agency in making the selections and deciding on the associations.

This concise analysis shows a highly polymorphic and disconnected network that fits the rich-get-richer model best. Also known as the Barabási-Albert model, the rich-get-richer networks are an evolving model which changes as a function of time, by adding or dropping nodes and edges. Translators who appear to publish according to a certain program are bound to acquire more links over time, which cannot be said about the author-nodes. Nevertheless, the evolution of the entire network is not actually influenced the most by such translators, but by those for whom chance plays an important role in the selection. Close reading shows that 75% of the translation events in Figure 1b are clear happenstances, which brings us back to the initial hypothesis that contemporary poetry translation, at least in a small, non-hegemonic country like Romania, is highly dependent on translators' personal initiatives. This also means that the network will mainly expand due to translators' contributions, not necessarily due to the prominence of certain authors and to the possible investment of mainstream publishers in such authors' works, as there seems to exist a critical mass of translations for each author, expressed by G's average degree of approximately 2. Moreover, authors gain centrality through their translators' positioning, which emphasizes the bidirectionality of any author-translator relationship and the importance of randomness in the expansion of the translation network in periodicals.

Finally, the nodes in this graph, the translators and the authors, are part of a larger network that is set in motion by connectivity, both internal and external (the way it relates to other exterior networks). Each unit in the literary translation system—authors, translators, journals, presses, etc.—forms a complex network both separately and together; that is, each unit can be, in turn, vertex (or node) and link (or edge). Highly connected clusters (networks) are linked to other tightly knit networks by the so-called weak ties.[51] Translation and the relationship literary translators and, by extension, a literature establish with foreign authors are such essential weak ties and the more happenstances in a translation network, the more chances for a growing number of weak ties with other foreign networks. Of all Romanian translators, the one whose influence drastically changes the positioning of any author-node and whose work establishes the highest number of weak ties with various foreign literary circles is Olimpia Iacob, the subject of the following section.

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[51] Mark S. GRANOVETTER, "The Strength of Weak Ties," in: *American Journal of Sociology* 78, 6, 1973, 1360-1380.

Network-Driven Translation and the Poetics of Fecundity

Olimpia Iacob is a former Associate Professor of English at the Vasile Goldis University in Arad. Unlike many other translators working in academia, her translations are little related to her scholarly work, in the sense that the latter does not determine her translation choices. The work of Canadian Stephen Gill has been to date the only topic she broached in her scholarly essays, as most of her other academic publications appear to be in the field of English as a Second Language. Currently retired, Dr. Iacob translated just shy of 70 American contemporary poets into Romanian before 2017, totalling one hundred and ten selections for six literary journals, making her the best placed and most prominent translator within the network in question (Figures 3 and 3b). She ranks first in all centrality charts and has the highest density of nodes attached (68), a position which reflects the motto on her translator page on the Writers' Union website:[52] "…there is an urgent call addressed to Romanian humanists that specialize in languages of wide circulation—that are also repositories of profuse cultural heritages—, a call which has to actually become a great responsibility, one that needs to be carried out perfectly and, most often, urgently." (Stefan Stoenescu, Ithaca, NY, USA, February 21, 2008). Her motto suggests a translator with a clear literary agenda; nevertheless, a mixed-method scrutiny of her bibliography begs the following question: how many of these transfers have been carefully thought-out and how many are due to chance?

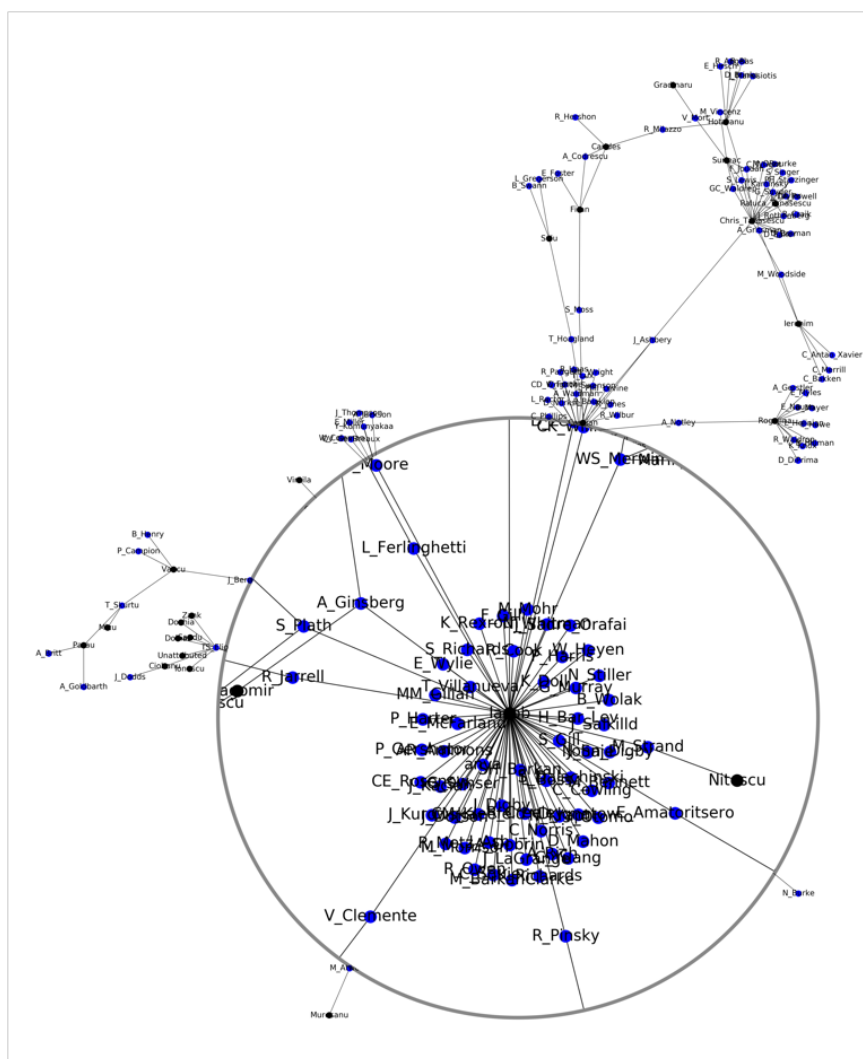[52] https://uniuneascriitorilorfilialaiasi.ro/olimpia-iacob/

Figure 3b. Translator O. Iacob in G0

Only one of the journals she has been contributing to is based in the capital city, Bucharest, and has a national audience (*Contemporanul-Ideea europeană*), while all the others are supported by various regional branches of the Writers' Union or local administration in north and north-east Romania: *Convorbiri literare* and *Poezia* are based in Iasi, *Poesis* and *Acolada* are based in Satu-Mare, and *Nord literar* operates in Baia Mare. Her resumé lists a significantly higher number of literary journals to which she contributed, an indication that her translation activity began many years before the National Library started the digitization of their bibliographies. In addition to the journals above-mentioned, she has been publishing selections in the following magazines: *Confesiuni, Citadela, Semne, Steaua, Cronica, Caiete Internaționale de Poezie, Origini, Hyperion, Ramuri, Viața românească, Unu, Porto-Franco, Centrul cultural Pitesti, Timpul, Familia, Vatra*, and *Caligraf*. According to the same source, she also translated selections from ten poets I did not include in the corpus[53], as I could not

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[53] These poets do appear in the corpus, but they are linked to other translators.

find any bibliographical reference for them: Frank O'Hara, Charles Simic, Anne Sexton, James Wright, Louis Simpson, John Fenton, Marge Piercy, John Deane, Ted Kooser, and Michael Waters. Further information on the bibliographic references for some other poets she listed on her page were available only by analysing the URL slugs of a suspended website showcasing the 2002-2012 archive of *Convorbiri literare*. Since the URLs contained the year and month the selection was published, I included eleven more poets in the corpus: A.R. Ammons (June 2003), W.S. Merwin (September 2003), Randall Jarrell (May 2007), Kenneth Rexroth (October 2006), Allen Ginsberg (November 2007), Louise Glück (November 2006), Derek Mahon (October 2012), and David Ignatow (December 2007). The corpus contains translations from the work of sixty-eight poets, of which only four are Canadian (Stephen Gill alongside tanka writers Christina Cowling, Guy Simser, and Changming Youan).

Her work has continued after 2017. Sampling a random issue (42-46/2017) of the *Confesiuni* literary journal, based in the small town of Petrosani, we find out that Ms. Iacob supplied three full pages with translations from the work of Canadian Jennifer (Jinks) Hoffmann (p. 23), Americans Carolyn Mary Kleefeld (different selections from what is presented in my corpus) (p. 30), Isaac Goldenberg (p. 26), and Emily Vogel (p. 26). The latter two appear with only one poem each alongside poets of various extractions: Marrocan, Hindi, Welsh, and others. Further probing of the journals she listed on her webpage led to *Citadela* (issue 4-6/2013), which features Iacob with a translation from an English-language poetry anthology published in 2011 in India. I posit that her eclectic translation program speaks for her agency in most projects she is associated with, just as her extensive selections and two volumes[54] by largely unknown Kleefeld do.[55] Her passion for poetry translation—for it is only passion that can animate a work which started back in 1976 and has continued to date—made her embark not only on a marathon of poetry selections published in various periodicals, but also on a sizeable amount of stand-alone collections by authors she likely admires.[56] Marius Chelaru, a poetry editor for *Poezia* and an author of haikus, offers a very rare testimony for Iacob's translation program:

> Olimpia Iacob has been working for some good years now on building an interesting bridge between Romanian and English-language poetries. Be they American or British poets and/or poets coming from other spaces (of various extractions, but all writing in English), Iacob has authored the Romanian renditions for books in which they appear either alone, or paired with Romanian authors. (Chelaru 2016: web)

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[54] Carolyn Mary KLEEFELD, *Zori hoinari / Vagabond Dawns* (Al. Zotta, Foreword; Olimpia Iacob, Trans.), Cluj-Napoca, Editura Limes, 2013; Carolyn Mary KLEEFELD, *The Divine Kiss / Sărut divin*. Ioan NISTOR. *În flăcările păpădiilor / In the Flames of Dandelions* (Olimpia Iacob, Trans.), Cluj-Napoca, Editura Limes, 2014.

[55] The corpus lists thirteen selections, alongside the one I mention here (in: *Confesiuni* 42-46, 2017, 30).

[56] Raluca TANASESCU, "A Micro-Centric Network: Post-communist Romanian mainstream and indie publishers of U.S. and Canadian contemporary poetry in translation", in: *Swedish Journal of Romanian Studies* 3, 1, 2020, 130-151.

What links Chelaru to Iacob is not only their affiliation with *Poezia*, but also their mutual interest in haikus: the translator has published several selections of haiku and tanka poetry in various literary journals, along with selections from American poets that were representatives for this form, such as Jim Kacian, whom she pairs in numerous volumes with Romanian writers interested in the same poetic form[57] and whom she also features as her co-translator[58] of several bilingual anthologies. In 2010 she also edited with Chelaru an anthology[59] of international haiku poetry that reunited American and Romanian poets. But her wide-ranging interests are not at their best in such a book: the bridges Chelaru refers to in his review of Iacob's book are best represented in a volume like *Punți peste ape*,[60] a bilingual anthology of international poetry in which she brings together American poets, American poets of Korean origin, Korean poets, Romanian writers, and 'international' poets. "How did she come to embark on such projects?" was the next question.

A brief selection from this above-mentioned anthology published in *Convorbiri literare* lists a book titled *La margine de Hudson*,[61] published in 1986 by Cross-Cultural Communications, as a source for the selected poetry by Vince Clemente, Arthur Dobrin, John Dotson, and Laura Boss. It is not a single occurrence, as Cross-Cultural Communication, a New York state publisher, seems to have fuelled many of her projects, just as The Seventh Quarry Press, a poetry magazine and press in Swansea (Wales), did. Further research into these presses led me to a volume they co-published in 2008, titled *Poet to Poet #1: Bridging the Waters—Swansea to Sag Harbor*, by Vince Clemente and Peter Thabit Jones, two authors Iacob has translated extensively into Romanian, both in journal selections[62] and in stand-alone volumes.[63] The close reading of Clemente's work revealed a long-time collaboration with Cross-Cultural Communication, who published two more volumes signed by him, while it

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[57] Constantin NOVĂCESCU and Jim KACIAN, *O liniste stranie / Strange silence* (Olimpia Iacob & Jim Kacian, Trans.) Timisoara, Waldpress, 2016; Jim KACIAN and Mircea PETEAN, *Haiku & Monoku* (Jim Kacian); *Haiku si poeme taoiste/ Haiku & Taoist Poems* (Mircea Petean) (Olimpia Iacob and Jim Kacian, Trans.), Cluj-Napoca, Editura Limes, 2016; Jim KACIAN, Eugen D POPIN, *No Way Out / Prins* (Jim Kacian); *Trupul țărânei / The Body of Dust* (Eugen D. Popin) (Olimpia Iacob and Jim Kacian, Trans.), Timisoara, David Press Print, 2017.

[58] Ana CICIO and Frank JOUSSEN, *Fețele iubirii/ The Faces of Love* (Ana Cicio); *Shades of Love / Nuanțele iubirii* (Frank Joussen), (Olimpia Iacob and Jim Kacian, Trans.), Cluj-Napoca, Editura Limes, 2013; ***, *Stare la Ora Amiezii / Mood at Noon*, (Lidia Charelli. Maria Bennett. Rebecca Cook. Mia Barkan Clarke. Cassian Maria Spiridon.) (Olimpia Iacob and Jim Kacian, Trans.), Iasi, Editura Timpul, 2013; Aura CHRISTI and Peter Thabit JONES, *Lăsați fluturii să zboare / Let the Butterflies Go* (Olimpia Iacob and Jim Kacian, Trans.), Iasi, Editura Timpul, 2014. ***. *The Light Singing / Lumina care cântă*, (Olimpia Iacob and Jim Kacian, Trans.), Deva, Editura Emia, 2014; Stanley H. BARKAN and Daniel CORBU, *The Machine for Inventing Ideals / Masina de inventat idealuri* (Olimpia Iacob and Jim Kacian, Trans.), Iasi, Editura Princeps Multimedia, 2014.

[59] ***. *Călători pe meridiane haiku. 20 de autori români si americani./ Travellers on Haiku Meridians. 20 Romanian and American Poets,* (Marius Chelaru and Ce Rosenow, Forewords; Marius Chelaru and Olimpia Iacob, Trans.), Ploiesti, Editura Premier, 2010.

[60] ***. "Punți peste ape." (Olimpia Iacob *et al.*, Trans.), in: *Convorbiri literare* 10, 2013.

[61] The translator lists the title in Romanian, not in the original language.

[62] Iacob even published a series of translations from this very volume, which likely marks the beginning of her collaborations with the American and Welsh publishers: "This first volume in a series, *Poet to Poet # 1: Bridging the Waters, Swansea to Sag Harbour*, […] offers two selections, one by American Vince Clemente and one signed by Welsh author Peter Thabit-Jones" (in: *Acolada* 9-10, 2008, 27).

[63] A note on Clemente's author page at River Campus Libraries mentions his collaboration on a bilingual volume of poetry, *Soapte ale sufletului / Whispers of the Soul* (2008), with Peter Thabit Jones, translated into Romanian by Olimpia Iacob (Iasi, Editura Fundației Poezia, 2008). She is also the translator of Jones's *The Boy and the Lion's Head*, a verse drama with an introduction by Vince Clemente (Satu Mare, Editura Citadela, 2009).

was readily apparent that Thabit-Jones was the founder and editor of The Seventh Quarry Press. Since 2008, The American publisher has been a regular source for the Romanian translator, who publishes numerous and extensive selections authored by Stanley H. Barkan, founder of Cross-Cultural Communicaiton, alongside selections by his daughter, Mia Barkan Clarke. Not before long my online 'detective' work related to the Barkans ran into other familiar names—for instance, the reviews for Stanley H. Barkan's *ABC of Fruits and Vegetables* (2012) are signed by Thabit-Jones and Maria Mazziotti Gillan, both poets Iacob has translated. Or here is S. Barkan pictured receiving "HOMER—the European Medal of Poetry and Art" along with William (Bill) Wolak, a poet that was translated by Iacob in a dedicated volume[64] and in two other volumes[65] featuring poetic dialogues with Romanian authors. Or here is B. Wolak's 2015 volume illustrated by John Digby and his wife Joan, poets whom Iacob translated and published before. And finally, the ultimate example of network-driven translation—Iacob, a translator from the English exclusively, translated in 2015 Annelisa Addolorato,[66] an Italian poet writing in Italian and Spanish. The mystery is quickly solved unintentionally by the translator's note, which lists the bibliographic information for her translation into English,[67] Addolorato's English translation by Bill Wolak and his wife, poet Maria Bennett, who also appears on Dr. Iacob's roster of translations. Therefore, it is very likely that Iacob translated Addolorato via the English translation published by the same Cross-Cultural Communication. It is also reasonable to think that she was introduced to Addolorato's work by the American couple Wolak-Bennett. Her network is thus ever-growing and many of the poetries she has been translating since 2007 are interconnected in one way or another.

That Iacob is a networker *extraordinaire* is clear. In network terms, she is a connector, a hub: not only does she connect cultures by means of translation, but she also assigns new tasks to the poets she translates, turning them into translators and co-translators of hers. Bennett, whom Iacob translated six times in selections for various journals according to the corpus, also features as her co-translator: once in a collection in which he appears as an author alongside Romanian Mircea Petean and as a co-translator of the latter's work,[68] and once as a co-translator of haikus[69] only. It is also the case of poets Rebecca Cook[70] and Kyung-Nyun Kim Richards,[71]

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[64] Bill WOLAK, *Deep into the Erasures of Night / Răsăriturile nopții* (Olimpia Iacob, Trans.), New York, The Feral Press, 2015.

[65] Ioan NISTOR and Bill WOLAK, *Semințe căutătoare de vânt / Wind-Seeking Seeds*, (Olimpia Iacob and Bill Wolak, Trans.) Satu Mare, Editura Citadela, 2016; Bill WOLAK and Daniel CORBU, *In the Hall of Lost Footsteps / În Sala Pasilor Pierduți* (Olimpia Iacob and Bill Wolak, Trans.), Iasi, Editura Princeps Multimedia, 2016.

[66] Annelisa ADDOLORATO, "Frenezia cuvintelor; Aparență; etc." (Olimpia Iacob, Trans.) in: *Convorbiri literare* 12, 2015, 134.

[67] Annelisa ADDOLORATO, *My Voice Seeks You* (Maria Bennett and Bill Wolak, Trans.), Merrick, NY, Cross-Cultural Communication, 2015.

[68] Maria BENNETT and Mircea PETEAN, B*ecause You Love / Fiindcă iubesti* (Maria Bennett) and D*in poemele Anei / From the Poems of Ana*, (Mircea Petean) (Olimpia Iacob and Maria Bennett, Trans.), Cluj-Napoca, Editura Limes, 2014.

[69] Ketaki Kushari DYSON and Marius CHELARU, *Privirea ei ca o pasăre / Her Look like a Bird. An Anthology*, (Olimpia Iacob and Maria Bennett, Trans.), Iasi, Editura Timpul, 2014.

[70] Dumitru TÂLVESCU and Rebecca COOK, *Umbra apei / The Shadow of Water* (Olimpia Iacob and Rebecca Cook, Trans.), Deva, Editura Emia, 2016.

[71] Marius CHELARU and Kyung-Nyun Kim RICHARDS, *Miroase atât de frumos a liniste. / It Smells Of Silence So Beautiful. Antologie /Anthology*, (Olimpia Iacob & Kyung-Nyun Kim Richards, Trans.), Iasi, Editura Timpul, 2016.

both co-translators in the bilingual volume they each co-author. Iacob operates within a unique poetics of fecundity, which reflects on the wide range of roles that she assigns both to herself and to those around her, as well as in the varied nature of her projects, in the heterogeneity of publishers with whom she collaborates, and in her openness to all poetic genres.

This poetics of fecundity that informs her work suggests Iacob is part of many tightly-knit circles (small worlds) that are related through several ties and that actually form a complex network. The most important tie may have been Marius Chelaru himself, who teamed up with Iacob on a quest to escort established international haiku poets to Romanian literature. My corpus shows that the process began in 2007-2008 with poet and publisher Stanley H. Barkan. During the same period, Chelaru himself published two selections by American haiku authors, Kerry Shawn Keys[72] and Zinovi Vayman.[73] Besides Barkan and other poets affiliated with his press, that year Iacob was still translating big names of American poetry, such as Mark Strand or Robert Creeley, but this kind of translation gradually subsided (with only Ferlinghetti and Plath in 2008, Adrienne Rich, Robert Pinsky, and Denise Levertov in 2009) and she focused on the network of poets that gravitated around Barkan. 2010 was an important year for Chelaru and Iacob, as they published a co-translation from Jim Kacian, "one of the half-dozen best-known practitioners of haiku outside of Japan,"[74] alongside a selection translated by Iacob alone in *Acolada*. Most importantly, the two included Kacian in the 2010 anthology of haiku authors they co-edited and translated. A publisher himself besides being a renowned haiku poet, Kacian does not bring along any other American or international peers, but is present in various roles, as I have previously seen, in many projects curated by Iacob—a collaboration that was still very much active in 2016.

Although Marius Chelaru played an important part in Iacob's evolution, I suggest her network developed circles that were independent from their mutual interest in haiku and tanka poetry. Unlike Chelaru, she simply translates poetry, irrespective of its form. Another indication is her collaboration with publishers based in Iasi for those projects that included Chelaru, and her subsequent collaboration with more obscure, regional publishers based in cities across Romania, such as Limes in Cluj-Napoca, Citadela in Satu-Mare, or Emia in Deva. Her projects with established publishers in Iasi, like *Timpul* or *Fundația Revistei Poezia*, are either projects with Chelaru or projects which included prominent local authors, such as Cassian Maria Spiridon, who is also the current Editor-in-Chief of *Convorbiri literare*. Such a convoluted publishing roadmap can obviously only be the outcome of the translator's own grown network of relationships, and not the outcome of any local cultural policy. Perhaps the most compelling indication that she acted mostly alone, without any significant institutional support, is the disheartening lack of reviews of her work compared to the number of translations she has published. The very few reviews that do exist are brief and evasive, with only one or two praising the

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[72] Kerry Shawn KEYS, "Morfină pe rîul Susqueshanna; Crescînd sălbatec cu indienii," (Marius Chelaru, Trans.), in: *Poezia* 3, 2007, 115-117.

[73] Zinovi VAYMAN, "Suferinda mea mamă...; Universitate verde...; Harta lacului Baikal....", (Marius Chelaru, Trans.), in: *Poesis* 9-10, 2008, 90.

[74] Jim KACIAN, *Presents of Mind,* (2nd edition), Winchester, VA: Red Moon Press.

Romanian rendition: "a fluent rendition […] done with empathy and delicacy,"[75] or "a fresh reading."[76] One of the two extensive reviews, occasioned by Iacob's translation of Kleefeld's *Vagabond Dawns*, awarded the 2013 (Iasi branch) Writers' Union translation prize, does not assess in any way the translation and only mentions it as the sole measure against which one can judge the lyrical qualities of Kleefeld's poetry.[77] Another extensive review of the same collection does not mention the translation at all, but talks only about the themes and motifs in Kleefeld's work, although illustrating copiously the otherwise simplistic observations and assessments with translated fragments.[78]

The evolution of Iacob's network of translated authors sheds light on two important phenomena that characterize certain chapters of poetry translation in Romania: the lack of copyright and the influence of personal networks. Shortly after I started researching her work, I contacted the translator to let her know about this dissertation and ask for her help in locating the bibliographic information for the authors listed on the Writers' Union website. The reply was prompt and stated that she was appreciative of my research and of *my concern with copyright matters*. That was obviously not the case at the time, as nothing in my e-mail message pointed at copyright issues, so it was most definitely the translator's concern. She also tried to divert me from her corpus by pointing out that it had already been included in somebody else's research. This incident made me realize why she stopped translating prominent poets and shifted her interest towards the network around Cross Cultural Communications: it was most likely because she did not need any copyright for these translations. Specific nodes in her network, such as Stanley Barkan or Vince Clemente—with whom she shares links which carry some of the greatest weight (six, respectively five features in literary journals)—were her very own lobbyists and all the other authors were happy to have their work translated into Romanian. The butterfly effect of literature had a paramount role in her growing the network.

The connective mind of translators is reflected best in Iacob's work, as well as in the case of many other translators, especially those that move constantly between cultures. The concept of network-driven translation helps us pattern the apparent chaos that surrounds translators' work in non-hegemonic contexts. It is built on the constant conflict between agent and system and is an expression of the network's self-regulation. The continued work and efforts of Iacob as a literary translator can thus be understood as shaping her own corpus. Translators are denizens, agents who dwell knowingly in a certain place and know the rules of the place, therefore they constantly adapt to the make-up, or the topology of the network, understood in its real-world locales and societal nexuses. More importantly, translators influence the network accordingly, with significant effects on our understanding of agency. A networked understanding of these corpora (and their relations with the 'originals') within a poetics of fecundity has the potential to

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[75] Andrei ZANCA, "Interferențe lirice," in: *Steaua* 5, 2017, 28-29.
[76] Liviu ANTONESEI, "Un volum de haiku si doi poeți," in: *@ntonesei's Blog*, [online], http://bit.ly/2C3jzOS, 2017.
[77] Ioan NISTOR, "Glasul zorilor si taina creației în poezia Carolynei Mary Kleefeld," in: *Poezia* 1, 2014, 236-239.
[78] Angela NEGREANU, "Vremelnicie si vesnicie în poezia Carolynei Kleefeld," in: *Contemporanul-ideea europeană* 8, 2014, 31.

expand how we think of authorship and auctorial patterns in general.

Conclusion

Relying on the polyvalent root-notion of cultural transfer and backed by a network approach that showed us how Romanian poetry translators go about their daily business, what are the venues they publish in, how they connect with the authors they translate, and, most importantly, how disconnected the world of literary translation really is, I hopefully demonstrated that indeterminateness and decentralization may play a much more important role than we are trained to perceive. Just as Anthony Pym notes in his 2007 essay on intercultural networks, employing a structural model that allows for multiple centers "invite[s] us to grasp the ways in which [translators] have configured their own spaces,"[79] and provides a context that does not make individual agency fade away against assumptions about economic power or hegemonic cultural policies.

This essay argued that acknowledging the role played by heterogeneity in translation within a paradigm that allows for the phenomena's uncertainty and randomness is a more revealing stance than assigning translators to premade categories that they need to fit in no matter their background or the associations they form. The investigation of the networks that Romanian poetry translators form with the authors they translate and publish in print periodicals suggests a wide range of complex relationships that lattice such networks and offers a comprehensive image of a translation landscape that could otherwise appear as simply fragmented, or chaotic, and lacking creative potential.

In Romanian literature, and possibly beyond, random translation transfers are engendered by a slew of non-linear factors, ranging from an overt desire for permanent change and personal connectedness to one-time translation caused by literary affinity. I argued that these practices should be seen from a microcosmopolitan perspective, as paramount for establishing positive relationships with U.S. and Canadian poetries and as energizing the local literary scene, rather than simply as reflective of a 'minor' mode of existence in a world where power relations dictate. Generally, translation accounts from small countries tend to be subsumed to a systemic view that lists bibliographic resources at most and pays little to no attention to translators' agency. An agent-based network modelling of bibliographic resources and of descriptive accounts could be a great chance for translations coming from lesser known cultures to be examined in their context of production and for individual translators to be remembered.

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[79] Anthony PYM, "Cross-Cultural Networking", 746.